

# LEAF SPOT AND BLIGHT OF BIRD'S NEST FERN

CAUSED BY *PSEUDOMONAS GLADIOLI*

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Bird's nest fern, *Asplenium nidus* L., is an attractive epiphyte, native from India to Queensland and Japan. It consists of a rosette of stiffly spreading, shining, green fronds of thin-leathery texture with blackish midribs and wavy margins (3). It is grown mainly in pot culture as foliage or specimen plants for use in indoor or tropical garden settings.

Leaf spot and blight, caused by the bacterium *Pseudomonas gladioli* Severini, was first found in several central Florida nurseries in the winter of 1982-83, causing losses up to 100% in some cases (2). Symptoms are quite similar to bacterial leaf blight, caused by *Pseudomonas asplenii* (Ark & Tompkins) Savulescu, described from California in 1946 (1). The latter disease has been found on rare occasions in Florida through the years. Laboratory procedures are required to differentiate the two bacteria.

**SYMPTOMS.** Lesions begin as small tan to reddish spots surrounded by dark brown to purplish margins (Fig. 1A, B). Symptoms may also begin at the leaf margin or expand from the spots into large, watersoaked blotches (Fig. 1A). Under moist conditions, leaf and plant death can result (2).



Fig. 1. *Pseudomonas gladioli* on *Asplenium nidus*. A) Overall showing tan leaf spots with dark brown to purplish borders and watersoaked leaf blotch (arrow). B) Closeup of leaf spots with necrosis advancing toward the midrib. (DPI Photo #702622-5 and #702662-8)

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SURVEY AND DETECTION. Look for tan spots with purplish to brown margins or large areas of watersoaking.

LITERATURE CITED.

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3. GRAF, A. B. 1974. *Exotica Third*. Roehrs Co., Rutherford, NJ. 1833 p.